

LOtC Consultation:

Should there be a Quality Badge for freelance providers  
working with young people outside the classroom?

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## **1 Introduction**

The aim of this piece of work is to scope the potential for individual freelance practitioners to attain a Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge or sign up to a 'code of practice', which would reflect the criteria for the recently established Quality Badge for organisations. Following the receipt of a Department of Children Schools and Families (DCSF) grant in November 2008, CapeUK was commissioned to complete this research and report to the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom in the Spring of 2009.

## **2 Methodology**

Everyone in the research team of three had previous experience of working on the gestation of the Quality Badge for organisations. In the light of the success of earlier investigative methods, this task was approached through a mixture of structured telephone conversations, desk based research, an online survey and a focus group. While the reach of the investigation did span each sector involved in the LOtC initiative, creativity and arts was particularly well represented in the responding group of the survey. We sought to rectify this imbalance when identifying individuals to contact for interview (see appendix Ai).

Discussions took place with 40 people and there were 427 respondents to the online survey. The survey had two defined routes for completion: one for those working as freelance providers and the other for those operating as employers of freelance providers. Responses were evenly divided between the two routes. Alongside freelance contributors from individual sectors, we received responses from professionals working as freelance science educators, developing philosophy for children, working in literacy and involved in more than one sector. Those taking the 'employer of freelance provider' route included both direct 'users' of LOtC, such as schools or youth groups, and organisations that are themselves LOtC providers but employ freelancers; examples include museums and ecology centres. Some respondents, such as local authorities and brokerage agencies, move between these two categories.

### **3 Background to the ‘Learning Outside the Classroom’ initiative and the Quality Badge**

Over the last two years the DCSF has invested considerable time, energy and resources in order to establish a more secure position for learning outside the classroom, initially through establishing a clear and accessible Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto in 2006.

A year later, a number of sectors agreed to take matters forward. Together, the sectors concerned with the natural environment, adventurous activities, farming and countryside, sacred spaces, creativity and arts, heritage, school grounds and built environment all worked to develop a wider LOtC support package. With the help of contractors CfBT Educational Trust and PricewaterhouseCoopers, a detailed school support package enshrined in the ‘Out and About’ section of the LOtC website was launched in October 2008 and from the end of January 2009 – the first Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badges were awarded.

The Quality Badge, currently only available to organisations, has been designed not as an end in itself, but as a tool to signify high standards and help users recognise high quality provision of learning outside the classroom. The DCSF, in their LOtC Manifesto (*November 2006*), maintain that *“quality can be the defining factor influencing participation in learning outside the classroom”* and express the aspiration that *“agreed quality assurance, recognised and trusted by schools, will encourage more activity outside the classroom”*. The Quality Badge provides a quality assurance framework for providers working in partnership with schools and youth groups and aims to reduce red tape, making holders a more attractive prospect for teachers organising learning experiences beyond the classroom door. It also aims to enable organisations to refine their quality assurance practice so that they are confident of providing the best possible educational experiences for young people. Badges are awarded by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, a new over-arching body supported by the DCSF.

The Badge is available to organisations providing learning outside the classroom for young people aged from 0 to 19 in both formal and informal educational contexts. There are two routes to gaining the Quality Badge. Route 1 is for those organisations whose activities are considered relatively low-risk, such as theatres, art galleries, museums, places of worship and environmental centres. Organisations that have a significant risk management aspect may need to proceed through Route 2 – please see [www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk](http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk) for further information. A Route 1 application costs £100 and is based on a self-evaluation process with one in ten organisations receiving an inspection visit. A Route 2 application is more expensive, frequently attached to other licensing processes and all applicants receive an inspection visit.

## 4 The Status Quo

### 4.1 Approaches to quality assurance and the management of risk

Leading funding bodies and development organisations across sectors normally associated with Route 1 of the quality badge application process have taken steps to offer advice and guidance on quality assurance. Guidance on the protection of children and vulnerable adults, and the insistence on stringent policies to back this up, has been a common condition of funding and so has probably become more familiar to organisational providers than freelancers. There has been considerable investment in web-based reference materials, recommended practice, publications, training modules, support for action research and case studies evidencing impact aimed at developing the practice of freelancers. The approach has been a divergent one responding to the very wide-range of professionals and settings involved. Compliance with guidance or involvement in training is left to a freelancer's discretion and market forces are left to weed out weaker practice. While this system assumes that potential employers are in a position to differentiate between a high quality and a mediocre offer, experience suggests that some users may be more naïve about what constitutes good practice than others.

The user/provider relationship in Route 1 sectors, e.g. in creativity and arts, is not necessarily handled in the same way when a freelance provider is contracted, as when a school decides to buy into an educational programme offered by an organisation. Lead professionals in schools employing a freelance provider may be doing so because the individual is offering a convenient, relevant and reasonably priced service. In these circumstances it is harder for a freelance provider to insist on an expensive project structure with a long lead in phase than it is for an organisation, which may have access to an attractive learning space to offer as a reward for additional planning and review time. Freelance providers can be in a weaker negotiating position, particularly when faced with busy, pragmatic clients. They may be fortunate and find that the school is happy to consider quality assurance a priority, but this is not always the case.

Some employers see it as their professional responsibility to take the lead on the management of risk, others see it as a shared responsibility, and a minority see it

*“As a professional, I would undertake the evaluation of a freelancer myself and whether they had a badge would be of no interest whatsoever - it would not remove any of my responsibilities for double checking everything myself and so would be a waste of time and money.”*

**Teacher**

as the responsibility of the freelance provider alone.

In sectors where organisations mainly follow Route 2 to achieve the LOTC Quality Badge, freelance providers are frequently subject to additional training or certification, which is compulsory prior to operating in the field. For example, it is a legal requirement that providers of adventurous activities above an identified risk threshold should be licensed, with the licensing process involving observation of the freelance provider in action with young people.

Through the introduction of procurement procedures, Children's Services Departments of local authorities have become more involved in the quality assurance of LOfC provision. Schools may be able only to employ providers that are listed by the local authority as 'preferred providers'. What is required of a provider in order to be listed varies between authorities; it will certainly include CRB disclosure and providing evidence of public liability insurance. Some Children's Services Departments make it a condition of payment that the provider completes risk assessment and evaluation forms for each activity.

#### **4.2 Approaches to Recruitment**

There are a variety of common procedures in place for users to identify high quality freelance providers, with acting on personal and professional recommendation being the one most frequently cited (85.6 per cent). The pivotal role of professional networking was acknowledged widely. Employing organisations that responded to the survey commented that, while this did not always produce the right person for the job because perceptions of quality are subjective, it is often the first port of call. Among these respondents 31.5 per cent also consider "approved" practitioners on a regional website or sector specific directory.

While the quality badge's role as a recruitment tool is proposed as only one dimension of its function, there were misgivings expressed by more than half of freelance providers who preferred their hard won "track record" to speak for itself. Thirty-nine per cent of user respondents on the other hand commented that they "rarely seek new practitioners" but tend to draw on "a pool of individuals who work with us regularly". A number of people interviewed commented that sometimes it is hard for more recently qualified or less experienced practitioners to break into the LOfC field. Reservations were expressed about the danger of a 'closed shop' as well as the perceived need to keep recruitment processes professional and make provision for expanding the available workforce.

#### **4.3 Approaches to Training**

It is important to remember that many freelance providers are 'lifelong learners' in their specialist fields and have a responsibility to be up to date with their subject knowledge. Consequently providers may prioritise training which develops their expertise in recent innovation, rather than that which develops their practice as LOfC practitioners. This would be particularly true for those with a portfolio career where education work is only one way they earn a living.

There is a variety of sector-specific training and accreditation available to freelance providers, mainly at a cost to the individual, creating small numbers of highly trained professionals. Appendix Bi lists the programmes cited by respondents. These professionals, following the completion of particular courses, are sometimes fortunate enough to appear on recommended lists. The 'Learning Through Landscapes' in the school grounds sector is a good example of an organisation working in this way. In the field of dance, within the creativity and arts sector, a developing accreditation framework will provide qualifications for professional dancers wishing to work with young people.

Each day a freelance provider spends training means the loss of potential earnings for that day, and this is compounded by the fee for the training itself. It is therefore not surprising that the survey exposed a polarised picture of training habits with 40.1 per cent of those

completing the survey accessing training designed to support their work with young people at least twice a year and 43.5 per cent rarely accessing this kind of training at all. Of even greater concern is that more than half of freelance respondents (51.9 per cent), concentrated in the creativity and arts, heritage and school ground sectors, would find it difficult to provide evidence of having attended safeguarding training.

Freelance practitioner respondents identified a number of ways in which their practice is currently developed, many of which demonstrate a significant time commitment:

- Learn from experience/practice
- Implicit in partnership working: cross professional dialogue
- Share skills with colleagues – informal support groups
- Attend sector specific training organised by networks
- Buddy with one prominent organisation
- Attend local/regional CPD provided by local authorities
- Attend training related to the delivery of accredited courses for young people
- Receive a grant for specialist research and training
- Study for a Masters in their specialist area.

## 5 Drivers for change

### 5.1 The move to professionalise the children's workforce

Over the last few years there has been increasing recognition of the contribution that adults other than teachers have made to children's learning. This has altered the nature of staffing within schools and encouraged the government to consider school staff as part of a wider children's workforce that extends beyond the school gates. A LOtC Quality Badge for freelance providers would be seen as making a contribution to professionalizing the children's workforce.

*"A Quality Badge for freelance providers would professionalise an itinerant – yet invaluable - workforce."*

**Head teacher**

An Integrated Qualification Framework<sup>1</sup> has been developed based on core competencies for those working with children and young people. While there is not a direct correlation between quality indicators and core competencies, the distinction between the two is less clear in relation to an individual than an organisation. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) has developed a professional development programme based on the core competencies<sup>2</sup>.

### 5.2 The perceived impact of a badge for organisations on work opportunities for individuals

There are anxieties about the perceived negative impact for freelance providers of a market where organisations are increasingly 'kite marked' or 'badged' and seen as qualitatively different from freelance providers. In the early stages of the introduction of the badge this may not be a critical issue but, as users and local authorities begin to trust the Quality Badge more whole-heartedly, the impact on freelance providers may become more significant.

### 5.3 The scale of the freelance LOtC workforce and growing demand for LOtC experiences

Five of the eight sectors involved in developing the original LOtC package acknowledge a significant number of freelance providers working independently in the field and value the contribution they make to children's education. This is a timely moment to work as a freelance provider of LOtC. The current Primary Curriculum Review (implementation in 2011) is likely to recommend that subjects are grouped into six areas of learning and are underpinned by the development of 'learning and thinking', 'personal and emotional' and 'social skills and attitudes'. The revisions, which seek to connect the learning that takes place in different locations and environments, should support the development of LOtC opportunities. The Primary Capital Programme could provide opportunities for imaginative use of outside space and creative partnership working. At secondary level, the Building

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.iqf.org.uk>

<sup>2</sup> Museums Libraries Archives Council. Self assessment framework. Working with children and young people 2008 ISBN 978-1-905867-26-4. [www.mla.gov.uk](http://www.mla.gov.uk)

Schools for the Future<sup>3</sup> programme is well underway and there are exciting examples across the country of the development of new relationships and space for learning beyond the classroom. The first years of the 14 to 19 Diplomas<sup>4</sup> are encouraging young people to spend greater proportions of their learning week in chosen vocational settings. The “Find your Talent” pathfinders<sup>5</sup> are extending the creative and cultural opportunities available in ten specific geographical areas; many other local authorities are using the momentum of the national initiative to develop a ‘cultural offer’ for children and young people.

*“Schools are going to need effective ways of identifying competent creative practitioners on a large scale. Brokers and cultural organisations won’t have the capacity to quality assure the work of freelance providers as directly as is currently the case.”*

***Find Your Talent Cultural Partner***

Will existing professional networks and word of mouth recommendations alone meet these growing needs or would a quality badge for individuals be a welcome addition to the recruitment toolkit?

The LOtC website includes a searchable list of organisations that have obtained the Quality Badge. If this system were replicated, it would create a national database of freelance providers working with schools. This would be welcomed by some and viewed with great caution by others. A major difficulty is the legal implication – that the website provider could be held accountable if a listed freelance provider transgressed safeguarding practices. Concern has also expressed that valuable local knowledge that enables a sophisticated match between a freelance provider and a group of children and young people would be bypassed.

A particularly interesting model has been developed by Early Arts<sup>6</sup> – a professional development network for people working creatively with children and families in the arts, cultural, early years, family, health and social care areas. ‘Brief Builder’ is a project planning toolkit that enables staff to consider the ‘why’ of the provision they are seeking, before deciding on the ‘what’ or ‘who’. The tool then generates a brief that is sent to freelance practitioners on the Early Arts database.

#### **5.4 The potential to increase standards of quality and safety**

As the demand for learning experiences outside the classroom grows, increasing numbers of individuals may engage with this work. Access to a ‘quality badge application process’ could help raise and maintain standards of quality assurance and safety amongst the self-employed LOtC provider population.

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<sup>3</sup> The Building Schools for the Future programme is delivered by Partnerships for Schools.  
<http://www.partnershipsforschools.org.uk/>

<sup>4</sup> Diploma Programme [www.direct.gov.uk/diploma](http://www.direct.gov.uk/diploma)

<sup>5</sup> Find Your Talent – <http://www.findyourtalent.org/>

<sup>6</sup> [www.earlyarts.co.uk](http://www.earlyarts.co.uk)

Approaches to assuring quality currently vary in emphasis and the application of a standardised set of indicators across sectors could simplify and regularise approaches, making mobility within and across sectors easier and safer and educating the users to expect higher standards of quality assurance.

*“If it gets people to think about what constitutes safety and what makes a good learning experience – that can only be a good thing.”*

***Employer of freelance providers***

### **5.5 The need to develop a well-trained and effective freelance workforce**

Of the freelance providers responding to this survey, 43.5 per cent rarely access training designed specifically to support their work with children and young people. Where there is training in quality assurance or health and safety available, it is not always comprehensive or tailor-made to need, it is always time consuming and can be expensive. Where sector specific guidance on quality assurance is available, compliance is discretionary.

Freelance providers not engaging in training rely on honing professional skills through regular professional practice. Where this is the case, quality assurance systems are particularly important. It is through two way feedback and reflection on impact that an individual becomes aware of how to refine their approach. Employers have a responsibility to contribute to this process and much to gain by working in partnership. A quality badge for individuals may help to compensate for the low level of training and feedback that some freelance providers' experience. However there may be other tools that could encourage and support a more collaborative approach to assuring quality.

It is gratifying to note that an indirect benefit of organisations operating within the parameters of LOTC Quality Badge indicators is likely to be a commitment to train the freelance providers they regularly employ (although the full impact of this may take a while to filter through).

## 6 Generic responses to the idea

### 6.1 Question One: What expectations do stakeholders have of the function of the badge and the features of an individual's practice that it might recognise?

The research team asked both freelance providers and their employers to suggest aspects of professional practice they would want a quality badge for freelance providers to recognise<sup>7</sup>. This was an open invitation to describe their preferences with no prompts. The following table illustrates the range of responses received:

<b>Expectations articulated that are similar to the organisational badge quality indicators:</b>	<b>Expectations articulated that are different to the organisational badge quality indicators:</b>
<p>That the freelance provider –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>operates in line with good health and safety practices</li><li>describes their work and costs for services accurately</li><li>is able to tailor work to the needs of different groups</li><li>plans and evaluates their work</li><li>adjust their practice in light of feedback.</li></ul>	<p>That the freelance provider –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>can engage the interest of children and young people</li><li>is experienced and skilled in specialist field</li><li>has experience working in education settings</li><li>is able to project manage</li><li>is passionate, adaptable, creative and committed</li><li>runs a legitimate business.</li></ul>

#### 6.1.1 Which expectations listed above are realistic and manageable?

A badge application process simply based on self-evaluation would be insufficiently rigorous to evidence the expectations listed in the right hand column, and yet these features were clearly prioritised by survey respondents. Application models involving careful combinations of entry criteria, training, portfolio development, external validation and workshop observation would be essential to collect evidence necessary to form these kinds of judgements and consequently would be expensive.

#### 6.1.2 Is there agreement about the function of the badge?

Where employers are prepared to support the idea, their interpretation of what should be at the core of the badge awarding process illustrates diverse interpretations of the kind of badge which would be most useful. The quotations below illustrate four divergent responses to the questions. Should we:

- be satisfied with a badge that is narrow in scope and deals with safety issues alone?
- aim for a badge which establishes quality indicators for everything apart from the creative elements of the work?
- use the badge to standardise language and understanding across sectors?
- or disregard everything but the content and delivery aspect of work?

<sup>7</sup> The survey questions are listed in Appendix Aii

*"I hope that it can be gained by GOOD PRACTICE rather than simply having good business skills or the ability to jump through bureaucratic hoops. I'm interested in the work in the session, not the ability to attend training sessions."*

*"Rather than checking the creative element of the work I would want the badge to support other areas such as the insurances, clearances, risk assessments, evidence of training etc "*

*"There needs to be a light touch quality mark which is about safety, excellence is another matter altogether."*

*"I would be looking for a standardisation of practice, shared language and understandings – resulting in a standard level of expectation..."*

Resistance was also expressed to something which appeared to disregard "unique" and "unconventional"

approaches as well as fear that the badge might encourage discriminatory practices or disadvantage practitioners from non-traditional backgrounds.

*"I am aware of practitioners we use regularly who are excellent but who cannot afford 'badging' that costs or who have 'cultural' or language difficulties. We would want to have a system that provides support and opportunity for those practitioners. Having all the paperwork doesn't guarantee an effective practitioner."*

**Employer of freelance providers**

### 6.1.3 Implications of these findings

Analysis of comments and open contributions caused the research team to proceed with caution when considering statistical evidence. It became apparent just how critical it would be to consider comment alongside data. Later in the survey, respondents were asked whether they thought a quality badge for individuals was a good idea and whether they would apply. As there is a wide range of expectations as to the scope and function of the badge, some of which may be unrealistic, respondents are not always saying 'yes' or 'no' to the same thing.

### 6.2 Question Two: Could the existing quality indicators be adapted for individuals?

In the survey the quality indicators were distilled into nine examples of expectations of good practice which might apply to a quality badge for individuals. (see Appendix Aii Question 12) Eight of these were endorsed to a level of 89.9 per cent or above. In the case of the ninth, 26 per cent of respondents felt that the consideration of sustainability issues was not valid. Further investigation suggests that this is a linguistic issue around choice of terms rather than wilful disregard for the planet and its ecology. There were individual responses raising the issue that jargon might be a barrier to comprehension. Guidance notes for applicants and worked examples of good practice should alleviate these concerns.

*"We're doing this already without a quality badge - what will this new scheme bring to our practice".*

**Freelance provider**

*"Duh! Please reassure me that any half decent self-employed practitioner does these things already?"*

**Freelance provider**

Some respondents expressed the view that it would be futile to simply acknowledge existing good practice. Keen ‘to move their practice forwards’, they were reluctant to endorse a kite marking process that acknowledged their professionalism without additional challenge.

While not statistically significant, 10 per cent of respondents were prepared to say that it was not applicable for them to “make good use of the location you are working in”, “discuss preparation and follow-up to activities” or “gather feedback from clients and learners about all features of activities including impact.” There are a number of ways of interpreting this minor difference. Some freelance providers are sub-contracted to organisations which mainly see them in ‘deliverer’ mode, sometimes using pre-planned modules. The handling of pre and post activity negotiations and evaluation of impact is managed by permanent staff. Had our numbers of respondents been greater, we may have begun to hypothesise that there are weaknesses in practice around these areas. However our interpretation is that these findings do not make the indicators any less valid but might encourage deeper discussions about the autonomy of the freelance provider in particular professional situations.

### 6.3 Question Three: What can be gauged from responses to possible models for a Quality Badge?

The survey asked respondents to put four possible models for the process by which freelance providers might gain a badge in order of preference with the following overall results:

The freelance provider.....	Freelance provider preference	Employer of freelance provider preference
Completes a self evaluation process that explains how their work reflects the quality indicators	*1 <sup>st</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Presents a portfolio of evidence of how their work reflects the quality indicators	4 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Attends a training course which explores the quality indicators and then completes a self evaluation process	3 <sup>rd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Completes a self–evaluation process based on the quality indicators and is then observed while working with young people	*1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>

\*The number of respondents indicating a preference for these models differed by only one.

The pattern of preference of freelance providers almost certainly reflects their difficulty that time spent on their own professional development is time spent not earning. Although it can be argued that gaining the badge is an investment of time that could increase employment opportunities, it is understandable that the more time consuming processes of attending training and of building a portfolio are the least preferred methods - the former only slightly so, the latter by a significant margin. However, responses to other areas of the

*“Presenting a portfolio of evidence seems highly ineffective but anything can be made to look good in a portfolio, I have seen it done; and yet, despite the fact that we all know it to be true, we are all easily taken in by a professional looking portfolio.”*

investigation clearly show that, although freelancers don't want a process to be time consuming, they do want it to be meaningful and developmental; there is little interest in a 'tick box' approach to quality assurance.

An analysis of freelance provider responses by sector reveals that the overall pattern is mirrored in the creativity and arts, school grounds and heritage sectors. In the adventurous activities sector, the simple self-evaluation was the least popular, which probably reflects a need for safe working practices to be actively demonstrated. In the natural environment sector, it is attending a training course, rather than observation, that shares the place of first preference with simple self-evaluation; this possibly reflects positive experiences of training in programmes such as Forest Leader accredited training. Response levels from the remaining sectors are too low to be meaningfully analysed.

The employers' preference for a process that includes observation probably reflects the strong interest – which is perhaps not achievable – in a badge that evidences the freelance provider's ability to engage with children and young people. It is the first preference of all sectors apart from sacred spaces, which gives portfolio building pole position, and heritage, which weights the two top choices equally. That employers should rate portfolio building as their second preference when it is the least preferred model for freelancers, does illuminate the tension between time and rigour.

Respondents were then asked to describe any other processes through which a badge could be achieved. Amongst freelance providers, a considerable number of responses suggested collecting references and testimonials from previous employees; a few also suggested including feedback from children and young people. A number of responses from employers of freelance providers suggested that a combination of methods was needed – for example training followed by observation. It was noticeable that many of the employers' suggestion assumed the process would include a dialogue between a freelance provider and a verifier.

A few employers mentioned peer assessment and feedback from children but, as was the case with freelance providers, reference and testimonials were the most frequently suggested alternative process.

This is consistent with the emphasis that freelance providers place on their track record and that

employers of freelance providers place on recommendation by others in the field. However, a number of users noted that, to be confident about a recommendation, they need to be sure that have the same perceptions of quality as the person making it. This may be much more difficult to gauge from a written statement than 'word of mouth' recommendation.

*"You'd need references and testimonials to be used to evidence specific indicators or competencies – otherwise they'd just be a set of happy stories that wouldn't really tell you what you needed to know."*

**Teacher**

*"To be honest if I have been given good feedback from other schools or seen the practitioner working with children previously I am more bothered that they can actually deliver. Pieces of paper mean very little to me. It's OK to talk the talk, but walking the walk is more important."*

**Teacher**

## 7 Sector specific issues

### 7.1 Adventurous Activities

Freelance providers, usually referred to as sole traders, have a major presence in this sector and their work is subject to the same requirement as that of organisations. Assurance of safety is obviously a prime concern. It is a legal requirement that providers of activities above an identified risk threshold are licensed. Licences cost around £700 and are awarded for between one and three years; the process includes observation of the applicant working with the client group. For providers of lower risk activities, the sector has introduced an 'Adventure Mark' with a similar cost and arrangements to quality assure safety processes. As the safety aspects of the LOTC all badge are covered by these systems, the sector had made available a 'top-up' to cover the remaining quality indicators; currently this is only available to organisations - this is problematic for the sector.

*"A group of young people might visit a centre with a climbing wall, or a sole trader might take a mobile climbing wall to a group of young people. All the issues and processes are the same."*

**English Outdoor Council**

There is some indication that the necessary focus on safety may have overshadowed consideration of other aspects of quality assurance. Of the eight freelance providers from this sector who answered this question, only two referred to the learning experience of the child or young person when describing the aspects of their practice that they would want a quality badge to recognise.

*"Until someone fails it won't be seen as a credible system. If people see it as an expensive tick exercise they won't go for it."*

**Association of Mountaineering Instructors**

The level of uptake of a Quality Badge in this sector (by either organisations or individuals) would be strongly influenced by the response of Educational Visit /Outdoor Education Advisers in local authorities. Providers will apply for the badge if it 'becomes the difference between getting work and not getting it'. As in other sectors, there was a demand for rigour and a connection made between perceptions of validity and likely uptake.

### 7.2 Built Environment

In the built environment sector, provision tends to be made by the salaried staff of Architecture Centres, with additional contributions from architects and planners. Engaging Places<sup>8</sup> – a resource to support teaching and learning through buildings and spaces that is managed by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage, is a key stimulus for activity in the sector.

*"I would be concerned that those who are badged become complacent and actually hide behind it rather than striving to improve even further."*

**Employer of freelance providers**

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<sup>8</sup> [www.engagingplaces.org.uk](http://www.engagingplaces.org.uk)

### 7.3 Creativity and Arts

Across this sector there is a range of guidance, quality assurance systems and accredited training. There is some innovative cross-curricula training in place for artists and teachers together, for example the TAPP project (see Appendix Bi) and other training which tends to be more art form specific; there are also significant gaps. Two of the many possible examples are:

- MusicLeader North West has completed the research and development phase of an intensive support and training programme for musicians working in schools and community settings. The programme is based on the national MusicLeader Code of Practice and identifies best practice under its six domains thereby covering both generic and art form skills development. (see Appendix Bi)
- The Council for Dance Education and Training (see Appendix Bi) has a system of recognition for dance schools. As a school can consist of a single peripatetic teacher, this can be described as applying to both organisations and freelance providers. The similarity between Recognised School Status and the LOtC Quality Indicators is striking. (see Appendix Bii)

The dance sector, in particular, is taking extensive steps towards ensuring that there is a well-trained workforce of freelance dance artists to meet increasing demands from education. Key national organisations have formed the Dance Training and Accreditation Partnership (DTAP) in order to develop affordable and rigorous training models and provide a new national qualifications framework. Arts Council England is funding the development of three strands of activity: qualifications for youth dance practitioners in the informal sector, regulation across the sector and National Occupational Standards. The new qualifications, which are being developed in partnership with Trinity College London, will be piloted by January 2010.

Within the sector, a network of Creative Partnership Area Delivery organisations<sup>9</sup> is augmented by a range of development organisations and brokers that foster partnerships between creative practitioners and schools and have varying levels of involvement in quality assurance and training. However, there are geographical areas in which no such support is available to schools.

Responses, from both freelance practitioners and those employing them, reveal a major concern that a quality assurance system – particularly one that acts as a gateway to working opportunities – might discourage the innovative, and possibly slightly ‘maverick’ provider. It might also exclude practitioners at the beginning of their careers, particularly those who have not come through traditional training routes.

*“You do need to be prepared to take some risks when recruiting. If you played it too safe, you would miss out on some truly innovative and engaging leaning opportunities for children and young people.”*

**Employer of freelance providers**

*“An anxiety is educational discrimination – tight standards that disregard unique but well thought and managed working methods.”*

**Employer of freelance providers**

<sup>9</sup> [www.creative-partnerships.com](http://www.creative-partnerships.com)

## 7.4 Farming and Countryside

There is a small demand for freelance providers in this sector, which is met from a pool of 'tried and tested' individuals; new entrants tend to come with experience of working in field studies centres. An important model is provided by the integration of the LOTC Quality Badge for organisations with the Countryside Educational Visit Accreditation Scheme (CEVAS) (see Appendix Bi). The latter is a requirement for farms providing learning opportunities for children and young people. It comprises a two-day training course, the development of a portfolio, self assessment and moderation visits to one of every ten applicants and is accredited through the Open College Network. The effectiveness of enabling LOTC providers to demonstrate that they meet the Quality Indicators as part of system that provides both sector specific training and a required qualification is evidenced by the large number of farms that have been awarded the LOTC Quality Badge for organisations.

## 7.5 Heritage

The pattern of employment revealed by the consultation is of freelance providers supplementing the capacity of salaried staff and working closely under their direction. It was felt that the Quality Indicators would need considerable revision to be applicable, as freelancers are not necessarily involved in the planning or evaluation stages of provision. In this situation, the responsibility for quality assurance clearly lies with the employing organisations; there would be no need for freelance providers to apply for a badge of their own. However, concerns were expressed that the very existence of an individual badge could shift this responsibility from the employing organisation to the freelance provider.

*"It may be that some s would feel that the existence of a badge scheme [for individuals] absolves them from the need to check references, CRB status and quality control. Money would be better spent supporting s to take this responsibility."*

**Employer of freelance providers**

*"Teachers are going to be interested to know that the venue they are visiting has the badge. How are they to know if the person delivering is self-employed or employed - they wouldn't know and probably wouldn't care!"*

**Employer of freelance practitioners**

## 7.6 Natural Environment

Provision in this sector can fall into either Route 1 or Route 2, according to the activity and its location. The Field Studies Council, Forest Education Initiative, National Trust and Groundwork Trust are among the national players. At regional and local levels, there is a great diversity of provision made by national and countryside park wardens, local authority environmental education officers and environmental trusts. The Forest Education Initiative provides Open College accredited training for those wishing to become Forest School Leaders (see appendix Bi); this is accessed by teachers and classroom assistants as well as by LOTC providers. As in the heritage sector, there are situations in which a LOTC provider organisation will employ a freelancer to deliver a session without involving them in its planning or evaluation.

### **7.7 Sacred Spaces**

In the sacred spaces sector, those involved in LOtC provision tend to be either full time employees or volunteers. Concern was expressed that a requirement for individuals to have a badge would constitute 'a nail in the coffin for volunteering'. Within this sector, safeguarding has additional connotations, with professionals highlighting the need to guard against incitement to racial hatred and protect children from 'light touch indoctrination'.

### **7.8 School Grounds**

Learning through Landscapes (LtL) has a strong presence as a membership organisation committed to improving the quality of school grounds. Freelance providers can gain membership by completing a training programme (see appendix Bi) and undergoing an assessment that includes observation of work with a group of children and young people. A minimum of two years experience in this field is required. There are costs attached to the training, accreditation and continuing membership. LtL maintains an 'approved list' of members that is available to schools. A small, well-trained elite of freelance providers has been developed within this sector.

## **8 Main Findings**

### **8.1 A badge for individuals can be invested with different meanings than a badge for organisations**

When applied to individuals, the distinctions between quality indicators and competencies tend to blur. Survey and interview responses from both users and freelance providers illustrate a difficulty in separating a quality assurance system for individuals from one accrediting skills and knowledge. Assumptions that gaining the badge would somehow enable individuals to become 'qualified' to work with children outside the classroom were among the responses regularly encountered in the survey.

One function of the organisational Quality Badge is to enable users to identify providers with quality assurance procedures of the recognised standard. Responses showed that, applied to individuals, this function becomes enmeshed with selection and recruitment procedures. The equality impact of such a change would require detailed analysis.

### **8.2 Expectations raised by a Quality Badge may be unrealistic**

High expectations of a badge were expressed by many respondents. For example, some assumed that all applicants would be observed working with children and young people or suggested that it should incorporate high level training. These expectations may be unrealistic because of costs and manageability issues, particularly in an unsubsidised system.

There is a tension between cost and perceived benefits. The same providers who wish the application process to be rigorous with 'live' elements are worried about the cost of gaining a badge, both in actual terms and the risk of losing income while completing the application and/or the training process. To resolve this situation in a way that makes the process manageable and affordable may result in a badge that does not then have the professional 'value' freelance providers are seeking in order to prioritise engaging with the award.

### **8.3 There is a moderate level of support for the introduction of a Quality Badge for individuals**

Two thirds of freelance providers responding to the expressed a level of support that ranged from mild to enthusiastic, with the greater proportion at the mild end of the spectrum. The remaining third would not apply for a badge or consider the system unnecessary. Support from employers is higher; 80 per cent are on the mild to enthusiastic spectrum – with the greater proportion at the enthusiastic end. The remaining 20 per cent considered the badge to be not essential or unnecessary.

When invited to give reasons why freelance providers might apply for a quality badge the majority of respondents answering this question said they did not think it would be a

personally satisfying experience, preferring instead to see the gain as mainly being for potential employers.

When the additional comments made in the survey and the interview responses are taken into account, it is evident that the level of support for the Quality Badge is not as high as the figures above suggest. Virtually no respondents expressed unqualified support. Positive responses from a significant proportion of both freelance providers and users were allied to the expectations mentioned earlier - they endorsed their ideal badge rather than a badge that it may be feasible to implement.

#### **8.4 There are anxieties that the system would be flawed**

Freelance providers recognise that commitment and uptake of a new quality badge will be determined by the extent to which their potential employers insist on it. Employers on the other hand, recognise that they will not be able to add consideration of a quality badge for individuals to their repertoire of selection procedures until there are a significant number of freelance providers brandishing the award. This impasse may lead to a very slow uptake of the scheme.

While personal recommendation is still a component of selection procedures there is a possibility that freelance providers holding the badge will be by-passed in favour of a word of mouth recommendation. Conversely, there is a risk that a badged individual may be appointed in preference to a freelance provider who has not got the badge and, owing to the lack of rigour of the application process, the 'badged' professional could be the weaker practitioner.

Not all freelance providers have sufficient autonomy in their work to ensure the full range of quality indicators can be applied across all their practice, particularly if they are working as a sub-contractor. Their freedom to negotiate for a quality project development process is sometimes compromised by their professional position.

#### **8.5 There are drawbacks to seeing quality assurance as any one partner's responsibility**

Best practice in partnership working between education staff and freelance providers demands that collaboration follows a 'plan, do, review' cycle and includes shared and articulated responsibilities with regard to safety and quality assurance. Will a quality badge for individuals make it easier for school staff to abdicate their responsibilities? Are there other ways to embed good practice that encourage users to retain a more active role?

#### **8.6 Compatibility with existing systems**

Concern was expressed by respondents in several sectors that a new quality assurance procedure could undermine existing systems or overwhelm freelance providers with competing schemes. The best use of resources is seen to be a system that supports and complements what is already in place.

Clearly there are examples of good integration of the quality badge for organisations with existing systems but this is mainly within the Route 1 pathway. There are far fewer

regulatory bodies managing standards and safety in the Route 1 field. Points of integration are therefore less obvious.

This initiative is not happening in a vacuum. A number of quality assurance initiatives are in the middle of their action research stage or in the throes of final evaluation processes. Taking time to review the findings of these projects prior to committing resources to a quality badge for individuals may be wise.

In the longer term, consideration may need to be given to the relationship between the LOtC Quality Indicators and both National Occupational Standards and the common core of competencies for the children's workforce

### **8.7 The Quality Indicators are strongly endorsed**

The value and relevance of the Quality Indicator to freelance providers was evident in their own responses and those of the users who employ them. It was broadly agreed that they could be applied to individuals with only minor amendment although reservations about the amount of work required on the indicators were expressed by the Heritage sector.

### **8.8 The investigation has highlighted training issues**

The low level of uptake by freelance providers of training related to safety and quality assurance is an issue that the Council may want to address as part of its broader remit to enhance the quality of learning outside the classroom.

### **8.9 There is a pressing need for a Quality Badge to be made available to freelance providers in the Adventurous Activity sector**

Safety assurance systems used by the Adventurous Activity sector do not distinguish between organisations and freelance providers. The LOtC Quality Badge is available as a 'top up' to organisations; its current unavailability to individuals is problematic.

## 9 Recommendations

In the light of these findings, it is suggested that:

1. A distinction is made between freelance providers of low risk activities and those working in higher risk areas to create Route 1 and Route 2 categories that mirror those defined by the Quality Badge for organisations.
2. The quality indicators are reviewed for relevance (particularly what will replace the 'organisational indicators') and a Quality Badge for individuals is made available via Route 2 only. It is envisaged that demand for this will be confined to the adventurous activities, farming and countryside and natural environment sectors. The badge would be managed by the awarding bodies involved in those sectors and would be presented on the Quality Badge website in parallel with, or possibly integrated with, the process for the organisational badge. Costs are likely to be in line with costs for the organisational badge. In instances where a freelancer is employed by a LOtC provider organisation, as opposed to directly by a user, the primary responsibility for quality assurance lies with the organisation and it is the organisation that should hold the Quality Badge. Freelancers engaged as subcontractors in this way may have limited involvement in the pre experience and post experiences stages of provision. A freelance provider wishing to apply for the badge would need to be able to demonstrate that they are able to apply the full range of indicators to their practice.
3. An area of the main LOtC website is developed to support freelance providers and the schools and other organisations employing them. A link from the Quality Badge site would direct freelance providers to this area. Primarily aimed at Route 1 providers and their employers, it would also be helpful to those operating within Route 2. The area would include a recommended code of practice for freelance LOtC providers based on the reviewed Quality Indicators. The code and supporting guidance would be designed to be used as the basis of discussions between freelance providers and their employer. Sample contracts or partnership agreements would also be provided.
4. Guidance is made available to those developing quality assurance systems within sectors or Children's Services Departments to encourage alignment with the LOtC Quality Indicators.
5. Consideration is given to piloting a software tool that enables freelance providers to collate evidence of compliance with the Quality Badge indicators in the form of feedback from users. The pilot might be most successful if it is aimed at new entrants to the LOtC field. The tool would provide a means of capturing, and reflecting on, a 'track record' as it develops.

## Appendix Ai: Individuals consulted via interview and focus groups

Sue Berry	Manchester City Council
Alice Bingham	Millennium Primary School
Peter Carne	Department for Children, Schools and Families
Angela Chappel	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Ruth Drury	Newall Green High School
Ruth Churchill Dwyer	Early Arts
Ornette Clennon	Individual Practitioner, music
Claire Eddleston-Rose	Arts Council for England, NW
Fiona Forrest	Arts Council for England
Beth Gardner	Learning Outside the Classroom
Bill Graham	Farming and Countryside Education (FACE)
Angus Gunn	Liverpool National Museums
John Hart	Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT)
Debra Kidd	Manchester Metropolitan University, Initial Teacher Education
Sasha Leacock	Forest Hill Arts College
Kathy McArdle	Find Your Talent Liverpool Pathfinder
Pete McGuigan	Creative Partnerships West Yorkshire
Joyce Miller	Sacred Spaces Sector Partnership
Richard Milton	Salford LA
Charlie Morrison	Greater Manchester Music Action Zone (GMMAZ)
Julie Mountain	Learning Through Landscapes (LTL)
Deborah Parker	North West Vision and Media
Ian Peters	Adventurous Activities Associates
David Prophet	Chorlton High Manchester
Tina Redford	Music Leader
Pauline Renshaw	Cheshire West & Chester Council
Simon Ruding	TiPP
Jane Sillis	Engage
Pippa Smith	English Heritage
Jas Sohel	Manchester Art Gallery
Chris Southwood	Groundwork Trust
Pete Stacey	Association of Mountain Instructors
Ruth Staples Rolfe	Learning through Landscapes
Louise Sutton	Manchester City Council
Becky Swain	Creativity, Culture and Education
Kaye Tew	Manchester Metropolitan University
Randall Williams	English Outdoor Council
Sean Williams	Centre for Dance Education Training
Tony Thomas	Field Studies Council

## Appendix Aii: Online Survey Questions

<p><b>Q1. Are you...</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A self employed practitioner employed by schools or other organisations to work with children and young people?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Or do you represent a school or organisation which identifies or employs self-employed practitioners to work with children and young people or has a broader interest in the safety and quality of such work?</p>	
<p>Here the survey split into 2 strands depending on how respondents answered the 1<sup>st</sup> question.</p>	
<p><b>Freelance practitioner strand</b></p>	<p><b>User, employer, broker &amp; professional body strand</b></p>
<p><b>Q2. Please indicate the sector in which you most frequently work (please choose one only)?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adventurous Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Creativity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Built Environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Farming and Countryside</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Heritage</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Natural Environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sacred Spaces</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School Grounds</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe)</p>	<p><b>Q17. Do you represent:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A local authority department</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A development/brokerage organisation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A sector specific centre or venue (eg farm, stately home, outdoor activity centre, ecology park, sacred space etc)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A youth organisation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A voluntary sector organisation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)</p>
<p><b>Q3. Are your contracts of employment with: (tick all that are appropriate)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local authority departments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sector specific centres or venues (eg farm, stately home, outdoor activity centre, ecology park, sacred space etc)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary sector organisations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Youth organisations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Schools</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agencies or brokers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)</p>	<p><b>Q18. Please indicate from which sectors you most frequently draw your freelance practitioners (please tick all which apply)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Heritage</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Built Environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adventurous Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Farming and Countryside</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Natural Environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sacred Spaces</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School Grounds</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Creativity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe)</p>
<p><b>Q4. Are there any existing registration processes, qualifications, standards or quality assurance systems in your field that have particular currency for you?</b></p>	<p><b>Q19. Are there any existing registration processes, qualifications, standards or quality assurance systems that have particular currency for you when you are looking to employ independent practitioners?</b></p>
<p><b>Q5. Which aspects of your practice would you want to be recognised by a Quality Badge?</b></p>	

**Q6. The Quality Badge is most likely to be based on a judgement as to whether an applicant's practice reflects various quality indicators. There are a number of approaches which could be adopted to gauge compliance with quality indicators.**

**With which of the following processes would you be prepared to engage? (Please tick as many as you wish)**

- Attend a training course which explores the quality indicators and then complete a self-evaluation process.
- Complete a self-evaluation process that explains how your work reflects the quality indicators.
- Complete a self-evaluation process based on the quality indicators and then be observed while working with young people
- Present a portfolio of evidence to a validator to prove that your work reflects the quality indicators.

**Q7. Can you suggest any other processes that would enable you to demonstrate how you meet the quality indicators?**

**Q8. Do you think attendance at training prior to application should be:**

- Optional
- Compulsory

**Q9. If a portfolio process were to be used, which of following types of evidence would you find it easy to produce and which would be more difficult?**

	Easy	Difficult
Evidence of attendance at safeguarding training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
References/testimonials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Examples of planning documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public liability insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direction to relevant web based material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Examples of risk assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Examples of evaluation documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comprehensive CV	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annotated digital images of your work with young people/documentary DVD of your recent practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Original operational guidelines produced by you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annotated samples of young people's work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vision document underpinning the philosophy of your work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q20. What would you expect to be confirmed by a 'quality badge for learning outside the classroom' available to individual practitioners?**

**Do you expect that a 'Badged' practitioner would, for example... (please tick all that you think might apply)**

- be experienced in their specialist field
- identify and manage risk effectively
- plan and review their work in partnership with clients
- take a rigorous approach to safeguarding young people
- communicate effectively with prospective clients
- adapt their work in the light of feedback
- take into account learners' needs and learning styles
- know how organisations offering services to young people work

Please suggest any other quality indicators you think are relevant

**Q21. The Quality Badge is most likely to be based on a judgement as to whether the applicant's practice reflects various quality indicators. There are a number of approaches which could be adopted to gauge compliance with quality indicators.**

**Which of the following evaluative processes would you most favour?**

**(Please rank in order of preference, with 1 being most preferred and 4 being least preferred)**

	1	2	3	4
The Practitioner completes a self evaluation process, explaining how their work reflects the quality indicators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Practitioner presents a portfolio of evidence to a validator to prove that their work reflects the quality indicators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Practitioner completes a self evaluation process and is then observed working with young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Practitioner attends a training course which explores the quality indicators and then completes a self-evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q22. Can you suggest any other processes that would enable the self-employed practitioner to demonstrate how they meet the quality indicators?**

**Q10. Why might you apply for a Quality Badge for self employed practitioners?**

(please rank according to which potential benefit motivates you most, with 1 being most beneficial and 6 being least beneficial)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
It would be personally satisfying to see if I could make the grade.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The application process would develop my professional practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would give me a competitive advantage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would enhance my marketing materials and my web site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would show my clients that I understand how to structure quality learning experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would affirm my commitment to safeguarding the young people I work with	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (Please Specify)

**Q11. Which factors might dissuade you from applying for a Quality Badge?**

(please tick all that apply)

- You're too busy
- Your track record speaks for itself
- Personal recommendation is what counts in your sector
- You'd be interested in a formal qualification but a Quality Badge doesn't go far enough
- Other (please specify)

**Q23. If training was offered to prepare individuals to complete any of the above processes do you think such training should be**

- Optional
- Compulsory

**Q24. Would your organisation have the capacity to run such training?**

- Yes
- No

**Q25. Does your organisation already provide training for self-employed practitioners wishing to work with children and young people outside the classroom?**

- Yes
- No

If Yes, please describe your training offer briefly.

**Q26. If you do provide training is it formally accredited?**

- Yes
- No

If yes, please state the accrediting body and any further details

**Q27. Which of following types of evidence of quality assurance have you seen used during your negotiations with self-employed practitioners?**

	Often Used	Rarely Used
Comprehensive CV	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Examples of risk assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annotated digital images of work with young people/documentary DVD of recent practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
References/testimonials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vision document underpinning the philosophy of a practitioner's work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Original operational guidelines produced by practitioner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annotated samples of young people's work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Examples of evaluation documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of attendance at safeguarding training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direction to relevant web based material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Examples of planning documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public liability insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q12. The following are examples of the expectations of organisations that seek the Quality Badge for Learning Outside the Classroom.**

**Are these expectations applicable to your work as a self employed practitioner?**

	Applicable	Not Applicable
Consider sustainability issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discuss preparation and follow up to activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Capture or agree learning objectives for activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gather feedback from clients and learners about all features of activities, including impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify and manage risk appropriately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Match activities to the age and learning needs of the learners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establish clear lines of communication with clients and learners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adapt future work in the light of feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make good use of the location you are working in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q13. How often do you access training designed specifically to support your work with young people?**

- More than twice a year
- Twice a year
- Once a year
- I rarely access this kind of training

**Q14. What has been the most useful training supporting your work with young people that you have recently attended?**

**Q28. When you are seeking to employ a new self-employed practitioner, which of the following have proved most effective at bringing appropriately experienced individuals to your attention.**

**(Please tick those strategies which have worked most successfully for you.)**

- Responding to flyers and other paper based marketing
- Searching the internet
- I do not currently contract individual practitioners
- I use an agency or brokerage organisation
- Word of mouth recommendation from colleagues and my professional network
- Considering 'approved' practitioners on a regional website or in a sector specific directory
- I rarely seek new practitioners but draw on a pool of individuals who work with us regularly
- Responding to unsolicited CVs or telephone enquiries

**Q29. How much would the holding of a Quality Badge influence your thinking when recommending/selecting/employing individual practitioners?**

- Entirely – wouldn't employ people who did not have it
- To an extent – would consider the Quality Badge alongside a range of other factors
- Not at all

Please comment further

**Q30. The Learning Outside the Classroom quality badge for organisations is designed to increase good practice available to young people and the adults who work with them.**

**What hope or aspiration might you have of a quality badge for individuals?**

**Q31. The Learning Outside the Classroom quality badge for organisations is a benevolent scheme relying on organisations' integrity in self-evaluation with 10% of applicants having an inspection visit. This has provoked anxieties about rigour.**

**What anxieties or fears might the quality badging of individuals provoke for you?**

**Q15. The administration of this scheme would necessitate a charge for the badge. More developmental schemes involving validation processes or training will be more expensive. Please indicate the maximum fee you would be able to pay, assuming the award would last for two years.**

- £50.00
- £100.00
- £150.00

Any additional comments?

**Q16. Having considered the issues raised in this survey, how necessary do you think it is to enable self employed practitioners to be able to gain a Quality Badge for Learning Outside the Classroom?**

- Good idea, needed to some extent and I would consider applying
- Good idea, but does this go far enough?
- Not necessary in my opinion
- Great idea, much needed and I would definitely apply
- OK idea, but not needed in my case and I would probably not apply

**Q32. The administration of this scheme would necessitate a charge for the badge. Developmental schemes involving validation processes or training will be more expensive. Please indicate the maximum fee you believe individuals would be prepared to pay, assuming the award would last for two years.**

- £50.00
- £100.00
- £150.00

Any further comments?

**Q33. Having considered the issues raised in this survey, how necessary do you think it is to enable self employed practitioners to be able to gain a Quality Badge for Learning Outside the Classroom?**

- Good idea, but does this go far enough?
- OK idea, but not essential
- Not necessary in my opinion
- Great idea, much needed and I would encourage individuals to apply
- Good idea, needed to some extent

**This is a confidential survey but we would value further correspondence with you about this topic.**

**If you would be happy for us to contact you again about this research or would like to receive an electronic copy of the main findings of this survey please leave your contact information below.**

**Name:**  
**Email Address:**  
**Phone Number:**

## **Appendix Bi: Professional and awarding bodies, training schemes and quality assurance systems cited by respondents**

### **Adventurous Activities**

#### **Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) (Sometimes referred to as Adventure Activities Licensing Service) - [www.aals.org.uk](http://www.aals.org.uk)**

Since 1996 it has been a legal requirement for providers of certain outdoor activities to people under the age of 18 to be inspected in order to obtain an AALA license. In 2007 the responsibility for implementing the regulations was transferred to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), but the AALA still carries out inspections and issues licences on the HSE's behalf. Requirement for a license is dependent on the nature, location and potential risk of the activity. The license only assesses safety and therefore does not look at quality of service or facilities.

#### **Adventuremark – [www.adventuremark.co.uk](http://www.adventuremark.co.uk)**

Adventuremark is a non-statutory safety scheme for providers of adventurous activities that are outside the scope of the AALA. The scheme was devised by the **Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee (AAIAC)**, who have appointed the **Adventure Activity Associates (AAA)** - [www.adventureactivityassociates.co.uk](http://www.adventureactivityassociates.co.uk) - to supervise and operate the scheme. Adventuremark allows providers to demonstrate to customers and participants that they adhere to recognised standards of safety and good practice, which are specified in the 'Adventuremark Provider Accreditation Criteria'.

#### **Association of Mountaineering Instructors (AMI) - [www.ami.org.uk](http://www.ami.org.uk)**

To become a member of AMI you must have attended Mountain Instructor award Training and gained either the Mountaineering Instructor Award or Mountain Instructor Certificate (The training and awards are provided by 'Mountain Leader Training UK' – [www.mltuk.org](http://www.mltuk.org) ). Members can display the membership badge as a sign of quality and AMI also offers training, support and an online database of freelance practitioners.

#### **British Canoe Union (BCU) - [www.bcu.org.uk](http://www.bcu.org.uk)**

The BCU aims to support the sport and those who partake in it. Membership is subscription based and benefits include a British Canoeing License, regular magazines, public liability insurance and discounts on equipment. The BCU also runs a comprehensive programme of personal achievement awards, leader awards and coaching awards, allowing successful participants to gain recognised coaching qualifications. Those undertaking coaching awards need to register with the BCU and also need to undertake first aid training and CRB checks for higher levels. The BCU also offers safety and first aid courses.

#### **Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL) - [www.outdoor-learning.org](http://www.outdoor-learning.org)**

IOL is a subscription-based organisation representing the interests of those involved in outdoor activities. Membership is scaled, ranging from individuals to businesses in the sector. The IOL provides information, support and offers recognised CPD and professional accreditation at various levels. IOL also recommends the existing LOtC quality badge for organisations on its website.

**Mountain Leader Training England (MLTE); formerly Mountain Leader Training Board (MLTB) - [www.mlte.org](http://www.mlte.org)**

The MLTE ensures quality in training courses and course providers who provide training on its behalf across the country. The courses and resultant qualifications are recognised by the AALA, DCSF and employers in the sector, and cover various aspects of Mountaineering and Climbing. Before attending the courses applicants need to have relevant experience, skills and first aid knowledge and, on receiving accreditation, are expected to keep their training relevant and up to date.

**Creativity and Arts**

**Arts Marketing Association (AMA) - [www.a-m-a.org.uk](http://www.a-m-a.org.uk)**

The AMA offers CPD, Events, Publications, networking and advice, although there is no specific advantage mentioned in terms of a quality badge or qualification. Membership can be individual or corporate and is non-vetted and subscription-based, with a scaled cost structure.

**British Association of Drama Therapists (BADth) - [www.badth.org.uk](http://www.badth.org.uk)**

BADth aims to represent and support the profession Drama Therapy and those working in it. Benefits of membership include support and information relating both to practice and employment issues and inclusion in their 'Find a Drama Therapist' online database. There are various levels of membership, but to be a full member the applicant must be registered as a Dramatherapist with The Health Professions Council.

**Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET) - [www.cdnet.org.uk](http://www.cdnet.org.uk)**

CDET describes itself as 'the national standards agency for the professional dance industry'. It undertakes advocacy, provides accreditation for dance courses and holds a national register of dance awarding bodies and dance teachers. This register is available on their website along with a wealth of other information in a free resource entitled 'Answers for dancers'. CDET has also introduced a 'Recognised Schools' mark, which is for pre-vocational schools working with students under the age of 16. This is self-validated, with applicant schools stating that they adhere to a set of nine requirements. The mark has to be renewed annually, and any school found to be failing in any aspects must then have its application reviewed.

**Foundation for Community Dance - [www.communitydance.org.uk](http://www.communitydance.org.uk)**

The Foundation for Community Dance was set up to support the development of community dance. It aims to achieve this through Advocacy and leadership, providing information, advice and guidance for those working in and involved in dance as well as supporting professionals through training and networks. The Foundation for Community Dance has also produced a code of conduct for community dance professionals, which covers five areas: Professional Competence, Responsibility, Safety, Working with People and Commitment to the Code of Conduct.

**Music Leader - [www.musicleader.net](http://www.musicleader.net)**

Music Leader supports music professionals working with or leading musical activities and projects for children and young people. Members gain access to support, training and

network opportunities. Music Leader has also created a code of practice for music practitioners, which encourages practitioners to adhere to six main ideals as follows: 'As a music Practitioner I strive to be well prepared and organised, be safe and responsible, prepare for and reflect on my work, have appropriate musical skills, work well with people and be committed to my own professional development'.

**National Association of Youth Theatres (NAYT) - [www.nayt.org.uk](http://www.nayt.org.uk)**

NAYT is a support /network offering CPD, information and advocacy as well an online database of those in its network. It is open to any group or individual using theatre techniques in their work with young people, outside of formal education. You can self-register online and the process includes questions on the nature of your work and issues such as inclusion and how you are funded etc.

**Teacher Artist Partnership Programme (TAPP) -**

<http://www.capeuk.org/programmes/tapp-programme.html>

TAPP is an action research process designed to bring teachers and artists together within a reflective professional development framework to investigate the possibilities and practicalities of working in partnership. TAPP explores approaches to teaching and learning through the experience and practice of the performing arts. TAPP is managed by CapeUK and was developed by a consortium of Animarts, CapeUK, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, LEAParts, Lift, LONSAS, NewVic and PLEY.

**Farming and Countryside**

**Countryside Educational Visits Accreditation Scheme (CEVAS) - [http://www.face-online.org.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1394&Itemid=1161](http://www.face-online.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1394&Itemid=1161)**

CEVAS accredits both farm staff who are working with school groups and certifies farm premises as being suitable for school visits. In order to be accredited, farm staff must undertake two days of training, provided by Access to Farms, and gather evidence to support what is being learnt. This results in an Open College Network qualification and additional advice and support is also available. Once accredited a farm may use the logo and certificate of achievement in promotional materials, to assure quality.

**Heritage**

**Heritage Education Trust; The Sanford Award - [www.heritageeducationtrust.org.uk](http://www.heritageeducationtrust.org.uk)**

The Heritage Education Trust aims to promote quality and good practice in education services at historic sites. This is recognised with the Sanford Award, which is judged annually. Historic sites apply for the award via an application form, which asks for details of the education programmes offered and examples and evidence of quality. Entrants are then assessed by an independent judging panel. If successful the award lasts for five years, at which point the holder can apply to be reassessed. Successful Awardees can display the 'Sanford Award Winner' Logo on publicity and educational material.

## Natural Environment

### **Forest Education Initiative; 'Forest school leaders'** - [www.foresteducation.org](http://www.foresteducation.org)

Forest schools are members of a local cluster. To set up a forest school you must join or set up a local cluster, and must be a trained forest school leader. Training is offered at various levels depending on experience and current practice, for which a demonstrative portfolio must be provided. You generally need to work up through the levels and in addition first aid qualifications and a CRB check are required.

## School Grounds

### **Learning Through Landscapes** - [www.ltl.org.uk](http://www.ltl.org.uk)

Learning Through Landscapes aims to promote the importance of good school grounds and the positive effects of pupils engaging in outdoor environments. Its work includes advocacy, research, the provision of training and working with children to improve the quality of school grounds. They have three types of membership, 'Schools', 'Early Years' and 'Professional'. Individuals who work in school grounds would join as professional members. Members receive information, support, discounts on training and professional members are also included on LTL's Directory of School Grounds Professionals.

## Other

### **Charities Evaluation Services; 'PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small s)'** - [www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?pg=42](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?pg=42)

PQASSO is a quality assurance system which can be used by small voluntary/community organisations to assess and improve the quality of their practice in all areas. The system is self implemented from a book, but CES also offers support and training to help with the process. A PQASSO quality mark has recently been produced in which an organisation is assessed to see that it is successfully implementing the system. This process includes assessment of work and on site visits.

### **Institute for Learning (IFL)** - [www.ifl.ac.uk](http://www.ifl.ac.uk)

The IFL is a professional body for teachers and trainers in Higher Education. There are different levels of membership depending on experience and qualifications. The IFL offers CPD and awards Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) and Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) to those who successfully go through a professional formation, which involves demonstrating competent use of teaching skills and the ability to meet the standards required of teaching. The IFL also acts as a voice for the profession and offers information, advice and a code of conduct its members are expected to adhere to.

### **Independent Safeguard Authority (ISA)** - [www.isa-gov.org.uk](http://www.isa-gov.org.uk)

The ISA has been set up in response to the 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006', to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. When the scheme is fully rolled out across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, employers who work with vulnerable groups will only be able to recruit people who are ISA registered. ISA will work closely with the CRB to assess applicants and keep an up to date database of Registered and Barred individuals.

**Immediate Temporary Care (ITC) - [www.itcfirstaid.org.uk](http://www.itcfirstaid.org.uk)**

The ITC is a first aid awarding body that provides training courses and qualifications in various different sectors, including 'First Aid at Work', 'Outdoor and Expedition First Aid', 'Education Sector', 'Motorcyclists & Drivers', 'The Care Sector' 'Sport and Leisure Tourism' and 'Forestry and Agriculture Sector'. The ITC is approved by the HSE (Health & Safety Executive) and its qualifications are recognised by the QCA (Qualifications Curriculum Authority).

## Appendix Bii: LOtC/CDET Comparison Table

		LOtC Quality Badge for organisations – 6 quality indicators					
		has a process in place to assist users to plan the learning experience effectively	provides accurate information about its offer	provides activities, experience or resources which meet learner needs	reviews the experience and acts on feedback	meets the needs of the users	has safety management processes in place to manage risk effectively
<b>CDET – Recognised School Status requirements</b>	have in place and adhere to appropriate health and safety (including safe dance practice), equal opportunities, customer service and staff development policies (including, without limitation, in respect of dealing with any complaints which the school receives)*						X
	ensure valid, enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure is in place for all members of staff (teachers, administrators and ancillary staff) working at the school						X
	employ or engage all teachers working at the school on appropriate contracts*						
	ensure all teachers working at the school hold a Council, QCA or other government recognised dance teaching qualification; or are actively studying towards such a dance teaching qualification; or can demonstrate equivalent professional teaching or training experience to the satisfaction of the Council					X	
	adhere to the Council's <i>Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for Teachers of Dance</i> or an equivalent code recognised by the Council			X			
	operate an annual staff appraisal system*				X		
	prominently display at all times or provide to all students a copy of Recognised School Requirements, full routine and emergency contact details; timetables; and details of venues and examinations public performances and/or displays						
	hold appropriate and adequate insurance						X
keep formal accounts which should be independently inspected or audited where required by law.							

\* Schools may wish to attend seminars provided by individual dance awarding bodies in these areas, in order to assist in their development.

